

*On the Wooden Image of Kannon Revealing
Divine Power¹*

In the reign of ex-Emperor Shōmu, the head of the image of Kannon, the attendant image on the east side of the Amida² in the golden hall of Shimotsuke-dera 下毛野寺³ in the capital of Nara, fell off for no apparent reason. The patron of the temple discovered this and planned to repair it the next day. He came back to find that the head had returned to its place of its own accord, just as it had been before, and that now it gave off light.

Indeed we know that the dharma-body of wisdom⁴ exists. This is a miraculous sign to bring the faithless to a realization of this.

37

*On the Wooden Image of Kannon Which Revealed
Divine Power, and Survived Fire¹*

In the reign of Emperor Shōmu, a wooden image of Bodhisattva Shōkanjizai 正觀自在菩薩² was enshrined and venerated at a mountain temple of Upper Chinu, Izumi district, Izumi province 泉國泉郡珍努上.³ Once a fire broke out and consumed the sacred hall. The wooden image of the Bodhisattva Kannon took about twenty steps out of the hall and lay down without sustaining any damage.

Indeed, we know that the Three Treasures shows its divine power although it cannot be recognized visually, having neither form nor mind.⁴ This is the first of all wonders.

1. Cf. *Konjaku monogatarishū* (XVI, 11).
2. Kannon is made an attendant of Amida in the scriptures of the pure land school. See *Kannuryōju-kyō* 觀無量壽經 (*Taishō*, XII, 265c).
3. See II.35, n. 6; Fukuyama, *Narachō jūin*, 194–198.
4. 理智法身 *richi-hosshin*; *dharmakāya* as embodiment of truth and wisdom. 理 often signifies the *tathatā*, supreme truth, true nature.

1. Cf. *Konjaku monogatarishū* (XVI, 12).
2. Kannon of the *Hoke-kyō*, *Muryōju-kyō*, *Kegon-gyō*, etc., in contrast to many Tantric variations of Kannon 變化觀音.
3. See II.2, n. 3.
4. 非色非心.

On Rebirth as a Snake Because of Avarice¹

In the reign of Emperor Shōmu, there was a monk who lived in a mountain temple of Maniwa 馬庭山寺² in the capital of Nara. When he was on the point of death, he said to his disciples, “After I die, you must not open the door of my room until three years have passed.”

Seven times seven days after his death, a huge venomous snake was found lying at the door of the room. As the disciples understood why it had come, they counseled it, opened the door of the room, and found thirty *kan* of coins secretly stored there. With this money they recited scriptures, practiced good, and accumulated merits for the dead man.

Indeed we know that the dead monk returned in the form of a snake to watch his hidden money because of his strong attachment to it. Here is an apt saying: “Even if you can see the top of Mt. Sumeru,³ you can never see the top of Mt. Desire.”

39

*On the Wooden Image of Yakushi Buddha Which Showed
an Extraordinary Sign, Washed away in the
Water and Buried in the Sand¹*

Between Suruga province 駿河國² and Tōtōmi province 遠江國³ there flowed the river Ōigawa 大井河. Beside the river was the village of Uda 鵜田, which is in Harihara district 榛原郡, Tōtōmi province.⁴ In the third month in the spring of the fifth year of the dog, the second

1. Cf. *Konjaku monogatarishū* (XX, 24).
2. Fukuyama locates it in the precincts of Tōdai-ji, near Maniwa no saka along the Saho River 佐保川. See his *Narachō jūin*, 277.
3. A cosmic mountain which stands in the center of the world. Taishakuten 帝釋天 resides on its summit.

1. Cf. *Konjaku monogatarishū* (XII, 12), *Genkō shakusho* (XXVIII).
2. Present Shizuoka-ken 静岡縣.
3. Present Shizuoka-ken.
4. Unidentified.